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7905

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification 6 :
A24F 25/02, B65D 81/22

A1

(11) International Publication Number: WO 98/28995

(43) International Publication Date: 9 July 1998 (09.07.98)

(21) International Application Number: PCT/US97/24083

(22) International Filing Date: 31 December 1997 (31.12.97)

(30) Priority Data:

60/034,626	31 December 1996 (31.12.96)	US
08/796,664	5 February 1997 (05.02.97)	US

(81) Designated States: CA, CN, CU, JP, KP, European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE).

Published
With international search report.
With amended claims.

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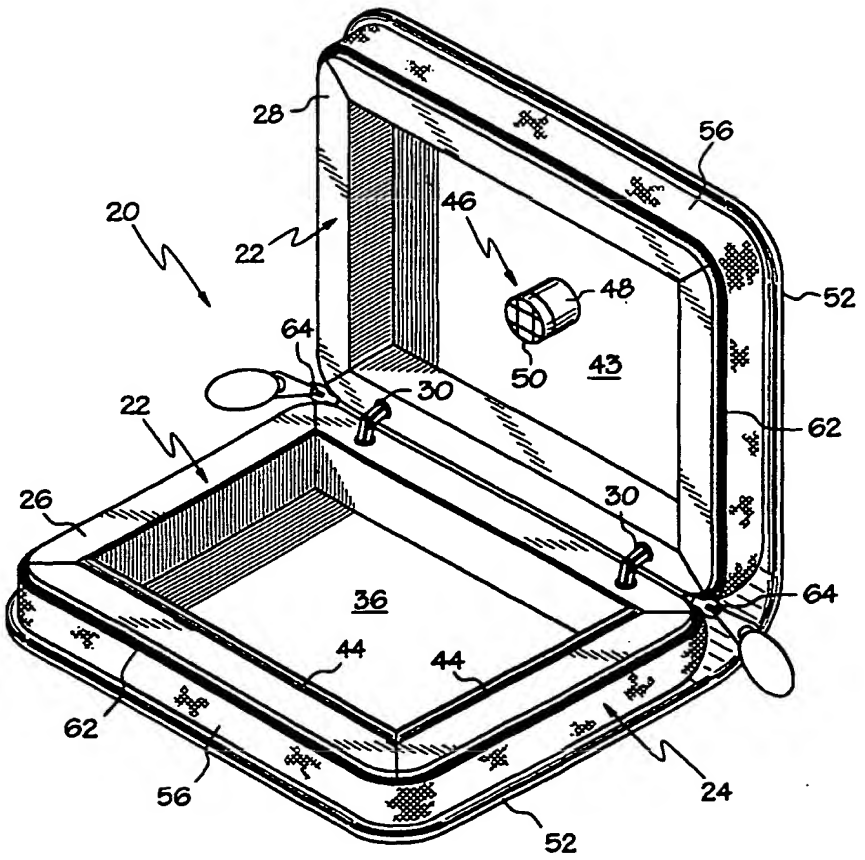
(54) Title: PORTABLE HUMIDOR

(57) Abstract

A portable humidor (20) has a cedar cigar storage container (22) formed from a lower housing (26) and an upper lid hingedly connected thereto (28). A cover assembly (24) having an outer surface of leather or other suitable durable protective material is secured to the cedar container. The cover assembly includes a zippered closure (62). When the storage container is in a closed position for travel, the zippered closure serves to entirely enclose the container within the cover assembly.



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PORTABLE HUMIDOR

BACKGROUND

1. Field of Invention

This invention relates to portable storage cases for cigars and, more particularly, to portable cigar humidors.

2. Prior Art and Other Considerations

Portable cigar humidors are known, an example of which, called "Pheasant's Leather Humidor", is shown on page 23 of Herrington, The Enthusiasts' Catalog, published 1996 by Herrington of Londonberry, NH 03052. The Pheasant Leather Humidor appears to comprise a box covered by leather and having a cedar lining. A humidistat is centrally located in a cedar panel recessed in the lid of the humidor. A leather strap with a male snap-fastener part is attached to the lid and cooperates with a female snap-fastener part on the front of the box.

SUMMARY

An object of this invention is to provide a portable cigar humidor of a durable construction which can be inexpensively manufactured, which has a pleasing appearance, and which retains cigars completely within a humidified, cedar housing.

Another object of this invention is to provide a portable cigar humidor achieving the foregoing object which prevents unwanted movement of the cigars within the humidor during travel.

In accordance with this invention, a cigar container which is preferably made in two body parts from cedar, namely a lower part or housing and an upper part or lid. Both parts have a rectangular framework including mutually opposing side pieces connected at their ends to the ends of mutually opposing front and rear pieces. A top panel is connected to the top surfaces of the lid framework and a bottom panel is connected to the bottom of the housing framework. The frame pieces can be connected to one another in any suitable manner, preferably along surfaces that form mitered joints, such as by a suitable adhesive or by mechanical means such as screws, wavy plates, dowels, or nails. The top panels and bottom panels can be connected to their respective frames by any of various means, such as adhesives, nails, wavy plates or screws. The rear frame members are connected to one another by hinges which, preferably, function to enable the lid framework to lie flush on the housing framework when the container is closed. A flange is formed on the inside surfaces of one of the frameworks - preferably the lower, housing framework - that is partly bounded by the other framework when the container is closed, so as to substantially seal the cigar enclosure from outside air. A humidistat is adhered to the center of the lid panel. The mounting for the humidistat can be conventional, utilizing a magnet glued to the lid panel so that the humidistat can be easily removed to moisten its sponge and easily replaced.

The lid may advantageously be provided with a foam plastic liner having a circular cut-out for the humidistat, and having integral, downwardly-extending projections for engaging cigars in the housing to keep them from moving around and potentially being damaged. A hygrometer may be optionally provided, either affixed to the lid panel or the housing panel.

Further in accordance with this invention, the

cedar container is enclosed in a cover assembly comprising a sheet of covering material such as leather, a plastic material that simulates leather, or other woven or unwoven fabric or plastic sheet material. The cover assembly preferably further includes a pair of reinforcement panels, which are preferably made of cardboard but could be made of fiberboard, wood or other materials, and which are preferably slightly larger in length and width than the container lid and box housing. When the container is closed, the reinforcement panels are substantially flush with the respective lid and housing panels and, accordingly, are separated by the thickness of the box. The covering material is wrapped around the side and front edges of both reinforcement panels and extends from the front of one reinforcement panel, across the rear of the box, to the front of the other reinforcement panel. The portion of the covering material spanning between the rear edges of the reinforcement panels is preferably provided with a flexible reinforcement to form therewith a flexible spine.

The cover assembly also includes a zippered, flexible webbing that is connected to the outer covering material and extends alongside the outer front and side surfaces of the housing and the lid. The zipper may be closed to join the portion of the webbing covering the housing to the portion of the webbing covering the lid, whereby the cigar container is enclosed entirely within the cover assembly and thus protected from damage during travel.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a portable cigar humidor in accordance with this invention showing the humidor in an open position.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a cedar cigar container forming part of the portable humidor of FIG. 1

showing the cigar container in an open position.

FIG. 3 is a plan view of a cover assembly forming a part of the portable humidor of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is a front elevational view of the portable humidor of FIG. 1 showing the humidor in a closed position.

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of the portable humidor of FIG. 4 taken along line 5 - 5 thereof.

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view of the cover assembly of FIG. 3 taken along line 6 - 6 thereof.

FIG. 7 is a perspective view similar to FIG. 1 but showing a second embodiment of a portable humidor in accordance with this invention.

FIG. 8 is a perspective view similar to FIG. 2 but showing a cigar container forming a part of the portable humidor of FIG. 7.

FIG. 9 is a cross-sectional similar to FIG. 5 but showing the portable humidor of FIG. 7.

FIG. 10 is a perspective view of a foam plastic liner forming part of the portable humidor of FIG. 7.

FIG. 11 is a plan view of the foam plastic liner of FIG. 10.

FIG. 12 is an elevational view of the foam plastic liner of FIG. 11 taken along line 12 - 12 thereof.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1 through 6 illustrate a first embodiment of a portable humidor, generally designated 20, in accordance with this invention. The humidor 20 comprises a cigar storage container, generally designated 22, and a cover assembly, generally designated 24. Preferably, the storage container 22 is formed from cedar wood, which enhances the character of cigars stored therein. Of course, other materials could be used to form the storage

container 22.

With particular reference FIGS. 1 and 2, the storage container 22 is formed from a lower or housing 26 and an upper or lid 28. The housing 26 and the lid 28 are connected along their respective rear margins by a pair of hinges 30. The presently preferred hinges 30 are conventional, commercially-available barrel hinges, which are entirely hidden when the lid 28 is closed against the housing 26. It will be understood that the particular specifications of the hinges 30 depend on the dimensions of the container 22 and, therefore, are not discussed herein. The barrel hinges 30 permit the lid 28 to lie flush against the housing 26 when the container 22 is closed, as best seen in FIG. 5. It will be understood that other hinge configurations may be used to achieve the same result.

The housing 26 is formed from a housing framework 32 and a bottom panel 34 secured to the bottom of the housing framework 32 which cooperate to define a rectangular cavity 36 in the housing 26 for storing cigars. The housing framework 32 comprises four frame pieces 38, namely opposed front and rear frame pieces 38A and 38B and opposed side frame piece 38C and 38D. The frame pieces 38 are connected to one another along mitered joints using a suitable adhesive, such a water-proof liquid resin glue (for example, Liquid Nails available from Macco Adhesives, Cleveland, Ohio 44115), or by mechanical means (not shown) such as screws, wavy plates, dowels, or nails, or both adhesive and mechanical means. The bottom panel 34 is preferably formed from a sheet of cedar plywood and is secured to the bottom of the housing framework 32 by adhesive or mechanical means, as described above with regard to the frame pieces 38.

The lid 28 is constructed similarly to the housing 26 and includes a lid framework 40 and a top panel 42 defining a rectangular cavity 43 in the lid 28. Likewise, the lid framework 40 is formed from four frame

pieces 45, namely opposed front and rear frame pieces 45A and 45B and opposed side frame pieces 45C and 45D. For reasons discussed below, the cavity 43 in the lid 28 is proportional to the cavity 36 in the lid 28, but has a slightly greater outside dimension (i.e. perimeter) than the cavity 36.

With continued reference to FIGS. 1 and 2, the housing 26 is provided with an upstanding flange 44 extending around the entire margin of the cavity 36 in the housing 26. The flange 44 can be formed by any suitable method, such as by use of a router in the case of wood parts. Alternatively, the flange 44 could be formed from separate flange pieces suitably secured to the housing frame pieces 38. Because the cavity 43 is proportional to but has a slightly greater perimeter than the cavity 36, the flange 44 extending around the cavity 36 is received within the cavity 43 in the lid 28 when the lid 28 is closed against the housing 26, as best seen in FIG. 5. The flange 44 and the flush relationship between the housing 26 and the lid 28, when in the closed position, cooperate to substantially seal the cavity 36 from outside air, which serves to protect cigars stored in the cavity 36.

A humidistat, generally designated 46, is secured to the top panel 42 of the lid 28 and is located in the cavity 43 therein. As conventional, the humidistat comprises an absorbent, sponge-like foam plastic member, which is not readily visible in the drawings, located within a plastic housing 48 closed by a grate-like cover 50. As well known, the foam plastic member is kept suitably moist to maintain a desired humidity level within the humidor 10. Preferably, a strip of magnetic material (not shown) is secured to the humidistat housing 48 and a similar strip of magnetic material (not shown) is secured to the top panel 42, whereby the humidistat housing 48 can be readily secured to and removed from the lid 28 to re-moisten the foam

plastic member within the humidistat housing 48. Of course, other suitable means could be used to detachably secure the humidistat 46 to the lid 28.

With reference to FIGS. 3, 5, and 6, the cover assembly 24 is formed from a generally rectangular outer cover 52 made from leather, simulated leather, woven or unwoven fabric, plastic sheet material, or other suitable flexible and durable material. In addition, the cover assembly includes a pair of mutually-spaced reinforcement panels 54, preferably made from cardboard, and a zippered webbing 56 made from a flexible material such as nylon. The cover assembly 24 is constructed by first lying the cover 52 on a flat surface and then placing the reinforcement panels 54 at mutually-spaced locations on the cover 52, the space between the panels 54 defining a flexible spine 58 of the cover assembly 24.

A spine reinforcement panel 60, which may be formed from the same material as the cover 52, is placed atop the spine 58 and is attached, as by sewing, to the reinforcement panels along confronting margins thereof. The webbing 56 extends around the outer margin of the reinforcement panels 54 and 60, and the outer portions of the cover 52 is rolled over and sewn to the reinforcement panels 54 and 60 with the margin of the webbing 56 trapped therebetween. As best seen in FIG. 3, the ends of the webbing 56 are joined by a conventional, two-way zipper 62 having teeth 63 which are drawn together or apart (i.e. meshed or unmeshed) by movement of sliding members 64, the joined ends of the webbing extending through notches 66 in the spine reinforcement panel 60. Each end of the webbing 56 is secured to the spine reinforcement panel 60 by sewing and by a rivet 67. For convenience, each of the zipper sliding members 64 has an enlarged tab 64A that may be grasped to move the sliding member 64.

Although the illustrated zipper 62 has two sliding members 64, it will be understood that a zipper

62 having a single sliding member may also be used. The use of a single sliding member 64 provides an advantage in that a user can tell from the location of the sliding member 64, when the humidor 20 is closed, which orientation is right-side up. In addition, a metal ring (not shown) or the like can be secured the cover assembly 24 in a well known manner, as by a conventional nylon loop (not shown) sewn to the spine area thereof, adjacent the end of the zipper 62 at which the sliding member is located when the zipper 62 is closed. Such ring can be used to attach a wrist strap (not shown) to the humidor 20, and a conventional lock (not shown) can be used to interconnect the ring and the single sliding member 64, thereby securing the contents of the humidor 20. Likewise, a lock could be used in a similar manner to inteconnect the two-sliding members 64 of a two-way zipper 64 to secure the humidor 20.

A suitable cover assembly 24 as described above is available from the Hazel Division of American Trading and Production Corporation (ATAPCO), Washington, Missouri 63090, and can be custom manufactured to correspond to the particular size of the cigar container 22.

Referring now to FIGS. 1 and 5, the cover assembly 24 is secured to the cigar container 22 by use of a suitable adhesive, such as the liquid resin glue mentioned above. The bottom panel 34 of the housing 26 is secured to one of the reinforcement panels 54 of the cover assembly 54 and the top panel of the lid 28 is secured to the other reinforcement panel 54. The webbing 56 alongside the outer front and side surfaces of the frame pieces 38 and 45 forming the housing 26 and lid 28, respectively. The spine 58 of the cover assembly 24 covers the rear outer surfaces of the housing 26 and the lid 28. When the housing 26 and the lid 28 are in the closed position, the zipper 62 may be closed to join the webbing 56 covering the housing 26 to the webbing 56 covering the lid 28, as shown in FIG. 4, thereby

enclosing the container 22 entirely within the cover assembly 24 for travel. When access to the stored cigars is desired, the zipper 62 is unzipped, and the lid 28 is pivoted to the open position shown in FIG. 1.

FIGS. 7 through 9 illustrate a second, preferred embodiment of a portable humidor in accordance with this invention. Because the second embodiment differs from the embodiment of FIGS. 1 through 6 in only one aspect, like reference numbers are used to refer to like parts.

The humidor 20 shown in FIGS. 7 through 9 differs from the humidor of FIG. 1 through 6 only in the addition of a foam plastic insert or liner, designated 100, secured within the cavity 43 in the lid 28. The liner 100, which is illustrated separately in FIGS. 10 through 12, is secured to the lid 28 by a suitable adhesive, such as double-sided adhesive tape, and has raised surface projections or contours 102 that extend into the cavity 36 in the housing 26 when the lid 28 is closed against the housing 26. Suitable foam plastic material is available from various suppliers, such as Special Design Products, 3755 Interchange Road, Columbus, Ohio 43204. The surface contours 102 of the foam plastic liner 100 engage the cigars located within the cavity 36 to prevent the cigars from moving around within the cavity 36, which might damage the cigars.

The liner 100 may be formed from a unitary piece of foam plastic material, in which case the preferred foam density it 1 pound per cubic foot. Preferably, however, the liner 100 is formed from two generally rectangular foam elements 110 and 112 secured together by a suitable adhesive, such as the aforementioned Liquid Nails adhesive, as shown FIGS. 10 through 12. The dimensions of the perimeter of the foam element 110 are substantially the same as the dimensions of the perimeter of the cavity 43 in the lid 28, whereas the dimensions of the perimeter of the foam element 112

are slightly smaller and conform to the dimensions of the perimeter of the cavity 36 in the housing 28. In this two-piece construction, the foam element 110 is formed from non-contoured foam plastic material, and the foam element 112 is formed from convoluted foam plastic material as described above. Preferably, the foam element 112 has a density of 1 pound per cubic foot, whereas the foam element 110 is slightly more dense, having a density of 1.2 pounds per cubic foot.

The two-piece liner 100 is secured in the lid cavity 43, as described above, with the convoluted portion of the liner 100 confronting the cavity 36 in the housing 28 when the humidor 20 is closed, as shown in FIGS. 7 through 9. As best shown in FIG. 9, because the dimensions of the perimeter of the foam element 112 are only as large as those of the cavity 36 in the housing 28, the foam element 112 avoids unwanted contact with the flange 44 when the humidor 20 is closed. It will also be recognized that similar results can be achieved using a one-piece construction. Of course, if no flange 44 is provided and the cavities 36 and 43 have the same perimetric dimensions, the liner 100 need not have different perimetric dimensions at its upper and lower margins.

Although the use of a liner 100 having surface contours 102 configured as shown in FIGS. 7 through 12 is presently preferred, it will be understood that the use of a liner 100 having other suitable surface contour configurations is contemplated and should be deemed equivalent for purposes of this invention.

As shown in FIGS. 7 through 12, the liner 100 is provided with a circular cut-out 104 for the humidistat 46. A similar additional cut-out (not shown) would also be provided in the liner 100 if a hygrometer (not shown) is provided in the lid 28. If neither a humidistat 46 nor a hygrometer is provided in the lid 28, then no cut-outs 104 in the liner 100 would be necessary.

While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to the preferred embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various alterations in form and detail may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. In a portable cigar storage case comprising a housing having a cavity in which cigars are stored and a lid hingedly attached to said housing and closing said cavity, the improvement comprising:

a cover assembly secured to and covering said storage case, said cover assembly having a zippered closure whereby said storage case can be enclosed entirely within said cover assembly by closing said zippered closure.

2. The improvement of claim 1 wherein said cover assembly has an outer cover comprising a material selected from the group consisting of leather, imitation leather, woven or unwoven fabric, and plastic sheet material.

3. A portable cigar storage case, comprising:
a body comprising:

a housing defining a cigar storage cavity, said housing having a bottom surface, opposed front and rear surfaces, and opposed outer side surfaces, and

a lid hingedly connected to said housing so that said lid and said housing are movable relative to each other between an open position and a closed position, said lid having a top surface, opposed front and rear surfaces, and opposed side surfaces; and

a cover assembly secured to said cedar body, said cover assembly comprising:

an outer cover formed from a sheet of flexible secured to mutually-spaced first and second cover panels, the space between said cover panels defining a spine section, said first cover panel covering the bottom surface of said housing and movable therewith, said second cover panel covering the top surface of said lid and movable therewith, said spine section confronting and covering the rear surface of both said housing and said

lid, and

a zippered closure member secured to said outer cover and extending around the periphery thereof, portions of said closure member confronting and covering the front and opposed side surfaces of each of said body parts, said closure member having a zipper for securing the portions of said closure member covering said lid to the portions of said closure member covering said housing, whereby said body is completely enclosed within said cover assembly.

4. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said housing and said lid are formed from cedar wood.

5. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 further comprising a humidistat secured to said lid.

6. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said outer cover comprises a material selected from the group consisting of leather, imitation leather, woven or unwoven fabric, or plastic sheet material.

7. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said closure member comprise flexible webbing material.

8. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said lid has resilient material secured thereto which engages and prevents movement of cigars stored in said housing.

9. The portable cigar storage case of claim 8 wherein said resilient material comprises foam plastic material.

10. The portable cigar storage case of claim 8 further comprising a humidistat secured to said lid.

11. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said housing cavity has a predetermined size and shape, wherein said housing has an upstanding flange extending around said cavity, and wherein said lid part has a recess formed therein which is proportional but slightly larger than said cavity so that said upstanding

flange is received within said recess when said parts are in said closed position, whereby said flange and said lid cooperate to substantially said cavity from outside air.

12. A portable cigar storage case, comprising:

a storage container having a housing member and a lid member hingedly attached thereto; and

a cover assembly secured to and covering said storage container, said cover assembly having a zippered closure whereby said storage container can be enclosed entirely within said cover assembly by closing said zippered closure.

13. The portable cigar storage case of claim 12 wherein said cover assembly has an outer cover comprising a material selected from the group consisting of leather, imitation leather, woven or unwoven fabric, and plastic sheet material.

14. The portable cigar storage case of claim 12 wherein said housing member and said lid member are formed from cedar wood.

15. The portable cigar storage case of claim 12 further comprising a humidistat secured to said lid member.

16. The portable cigar storage case of claim 12 wherein said lid member has resilient material secured thereto which engages and prevents movement of cigars stored in said housing member.

17. The portable cigar storage case of claim 16 wherein said resilient material comprises foam plastic material.

18. The portable cigar storage case of claim 16 further comprising a humidistat secured to said lid.

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 30 April 1998 (30.04.98); original claims 1-3 and 11 amended; remaining claims unchanged (4 pages)]

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A portable cigar humidor comprising a container including a housing having a cigar-receiving cavity and a lid hingedly attached to said housing and closing said cavity; and

a cover assembly secured to and covering said container, said cover assembly having a zippered closure so constructed that said container can be enclosed entirely within said cover assembly by closing said zippered closure.

2. The cigar humidor of claim 1 wherein said cover assembly has an outer cover comprising a material selected from the group consisting of leather, imitation leather, woven or unwoven fabric, and plastic sheet material.

3. A portable cigar storage case, comprising:

a body comprising:

a housing defining a cigar storage cavity, said housing having a bottom surface, opposed front and rear surfaces, and opposed outer side surfaces, and

a lid hingedly connected to said housing so that said lid and said housing are movable relative to each other between an open position and a closed position, said lid having a top surface, opposed front and rear surfaces, and opposed side surfaces; and

a cover assembly secured to said body, said cover assembly comprising:

mutually-spaced first and second cover panels, and

an outer cover formed from a sheet of flexible material secured to said first and second cover panels, said flexible material

between said cover panels defining a spine section, said first cover panel covering the bottom surface of said housing and movable therewith, said second cover panel covering the top surface of said lid and movable therewith, said spine section confronting and covering the rear surface of both said housing and said lid, and

a zippered closure member secured to said outer cover and extending around the periphery thereof, portions of said closure member confronting and covering the front and opposed side surfaces of each of said body parts, said closure member having a zipper for securing the portions of said closure member covering said lid to the portions of said closure member covering said housing, whereby said body is completely enclosed within said cover assembly.

4. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said housing and said lid are formed from cedar wood.

5. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 further comprising a humidistat secured to said lid.

6. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said outer cover comprises a material selected from the group consisting of leather, imitation leather, woven or unwoven fabric, or plastic sheet material.

7. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said closure member comprise flexible webbing material.

8. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said lid has resilient material secured thereto which engages and prevents movement of cigars stored in said housing.

9. The portable cigar storage case of claim 8 wherein said resilient material comprises foam plastic material.

10. The portable cigar storage case of claim 8 further comprising a humidistat secured to said lid.

11. The portable cigar storage case of claim 3 wherein said housing cavity has a predetermined size and shape, wherein said housing has an upstanding flange extending around said cavity, and wherein said lid has a recess formed therein which is proportional to but slightly larger than said cavity so that said upstanding flange is received within said recess when said parts are in said closed position, whereby said flange and said lid cooperate to substantially seal said cavity from outside air.

12. A portable cigar storage case, comprising:

a storage container having a housing member and a lid member hingedly attached thereto; and

a cover assembly secured to and covering said storage container, said cover assembly having a zippered closure whereby said storage container can be enclosed entirely within said cover assembly by closing said zippered closure.

13. The portable cigar storage case of claim 12 wherein said cover assembly has an outer cover comprising a material selected from the group consisting of leather, imitation leather, woven or unwoven fabric, and plastic sheet material.

14. The portable cigar storage case of claim 12 wherein said housing member and said lid member are formed from cedar wood.

15. The portable cigar storage case of claim 12 further comprising a humidistat secured to said lid member.

16. The portable cigar storage case of claim 12 wherein said lid member has resilient material secured thereto which engages and prevents movement of cigars stored in said housing member.

17. The portable cigar storage case of claim 16 wherein said resilient material comprises foam plastic

material.

18. The portable cigar storage case of claim 16 further comprising a humidistat secured to said lid.

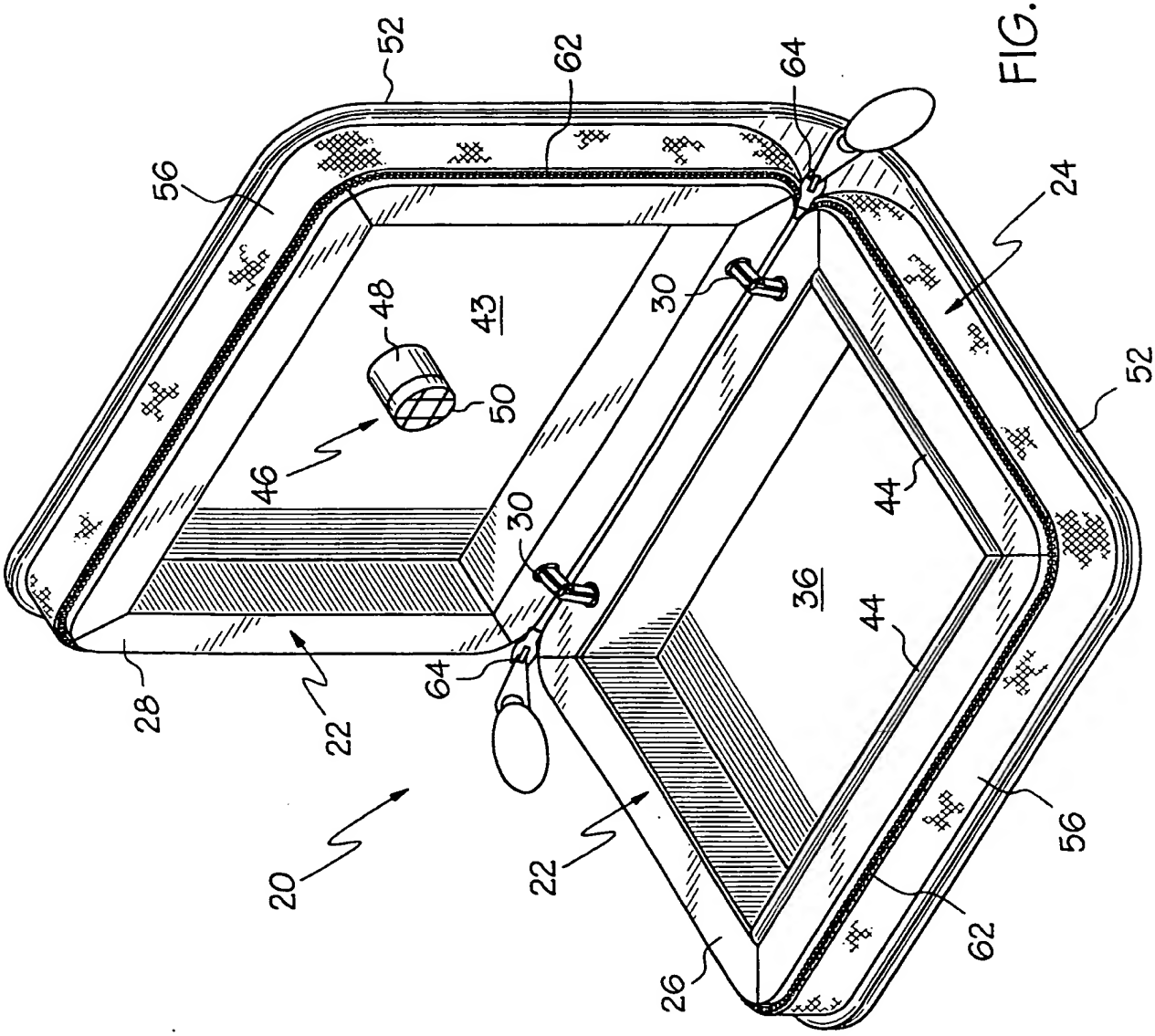

FIG. 1

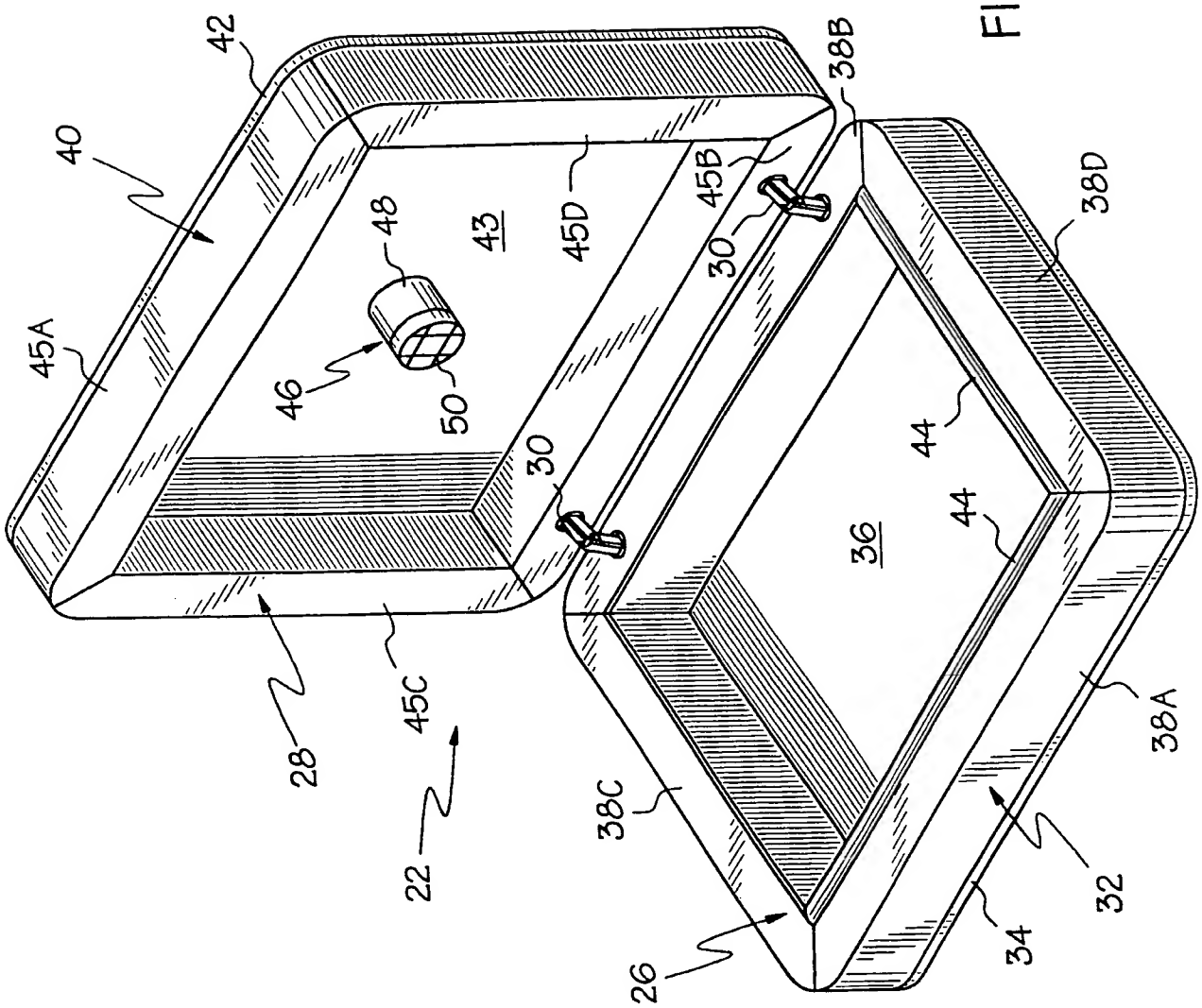
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FIG. 2

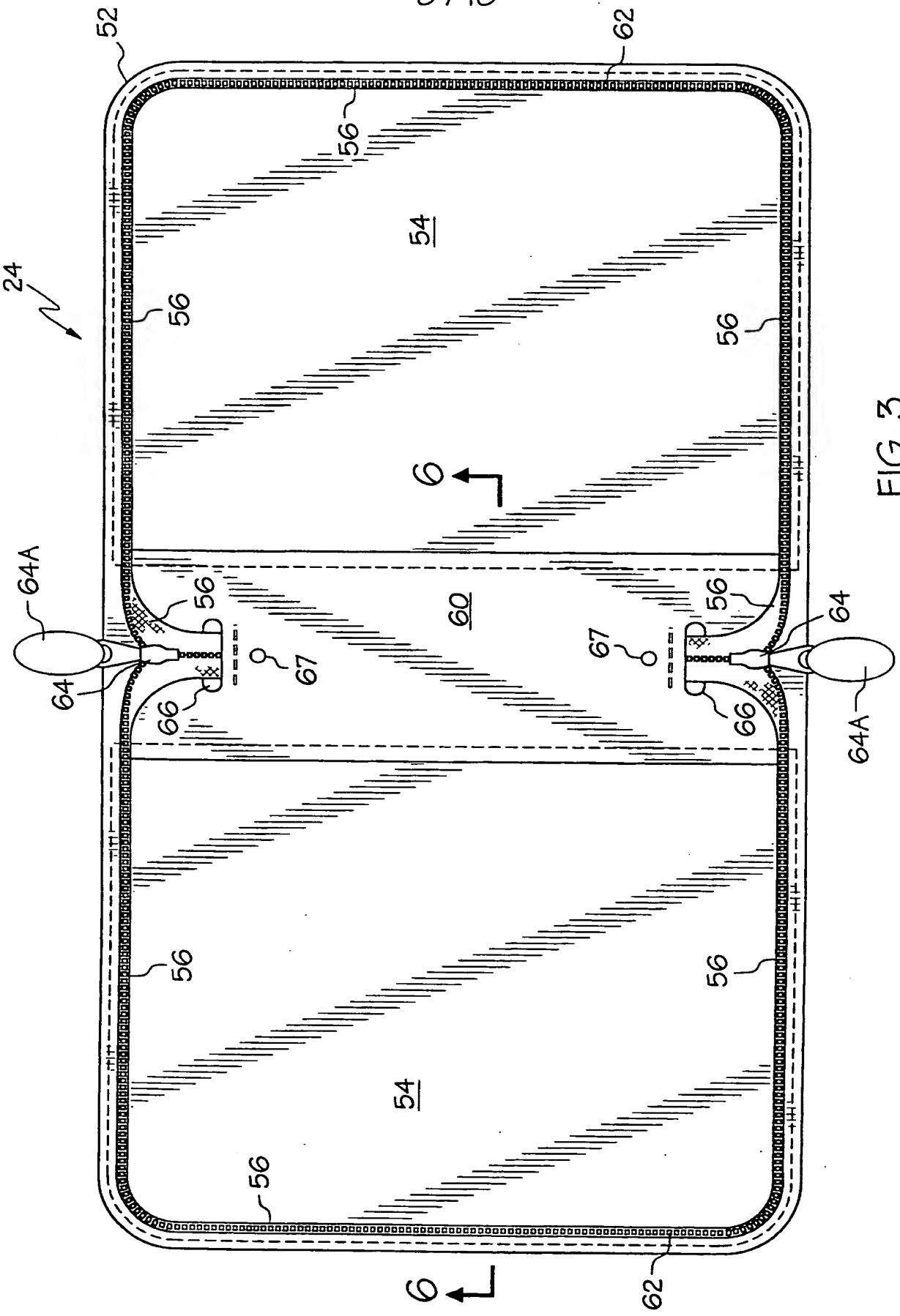
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FIG. 3

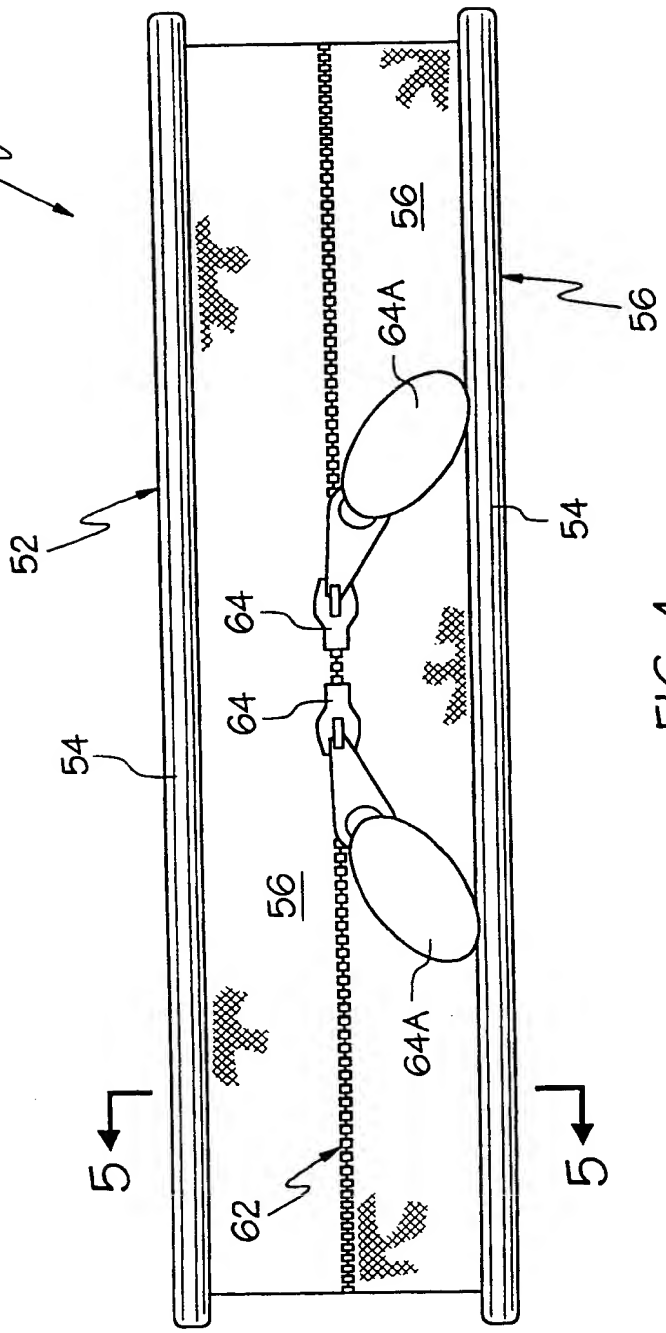

FIG. 4

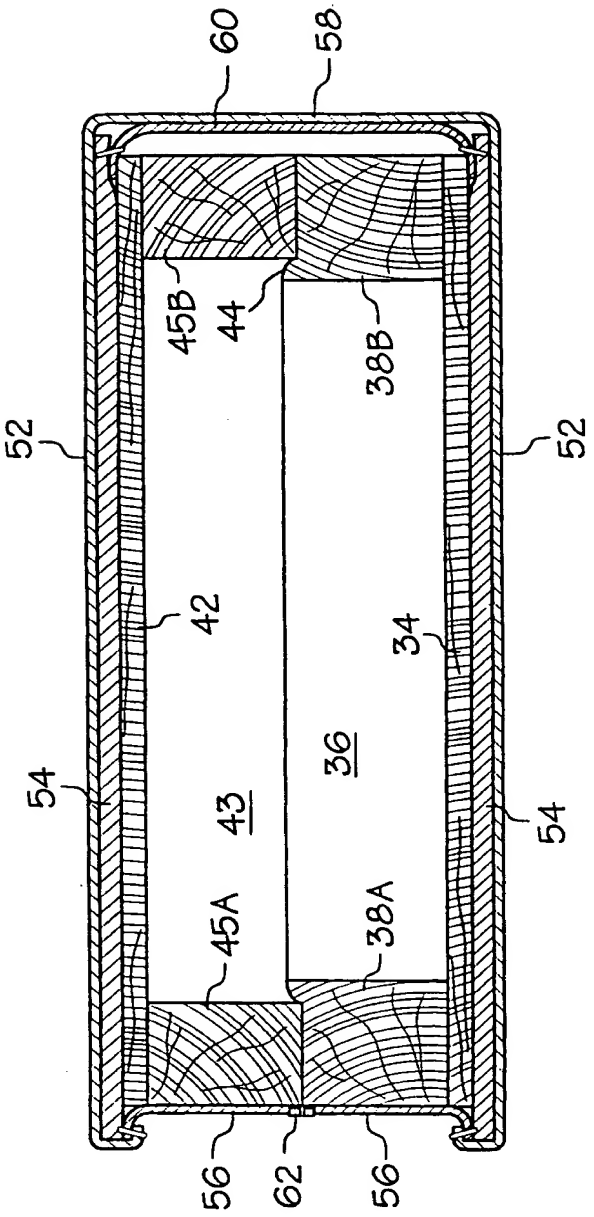

FIG. 5

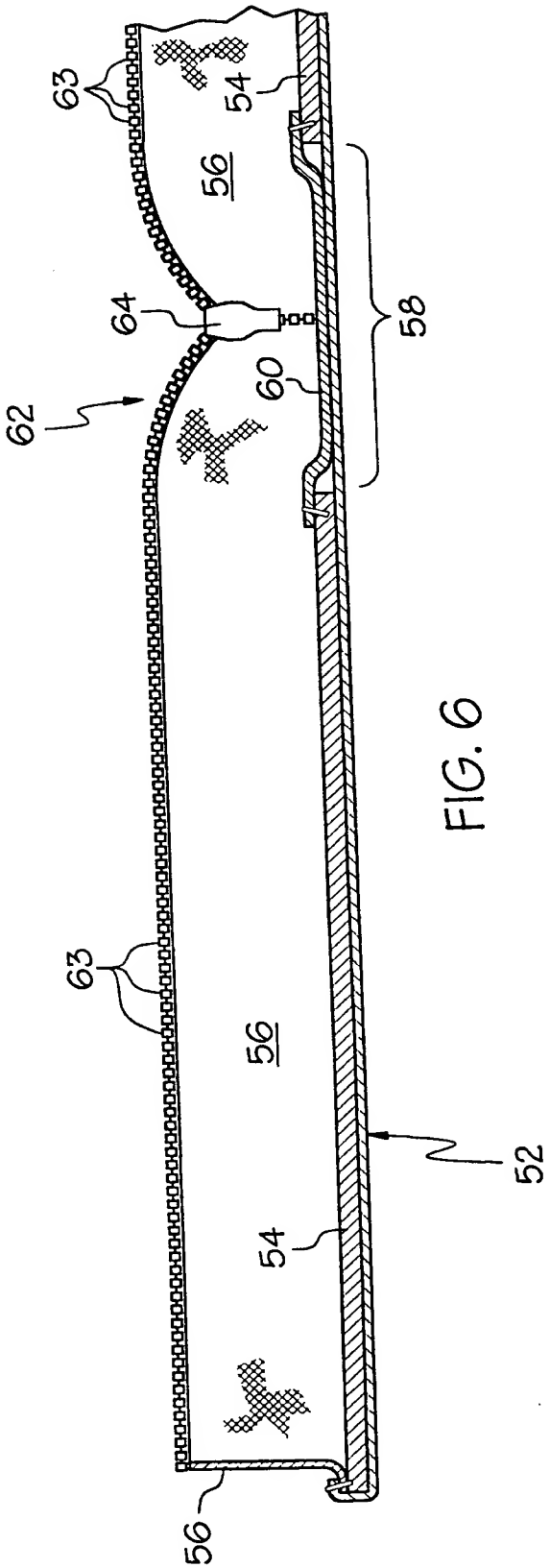

FIG. 6

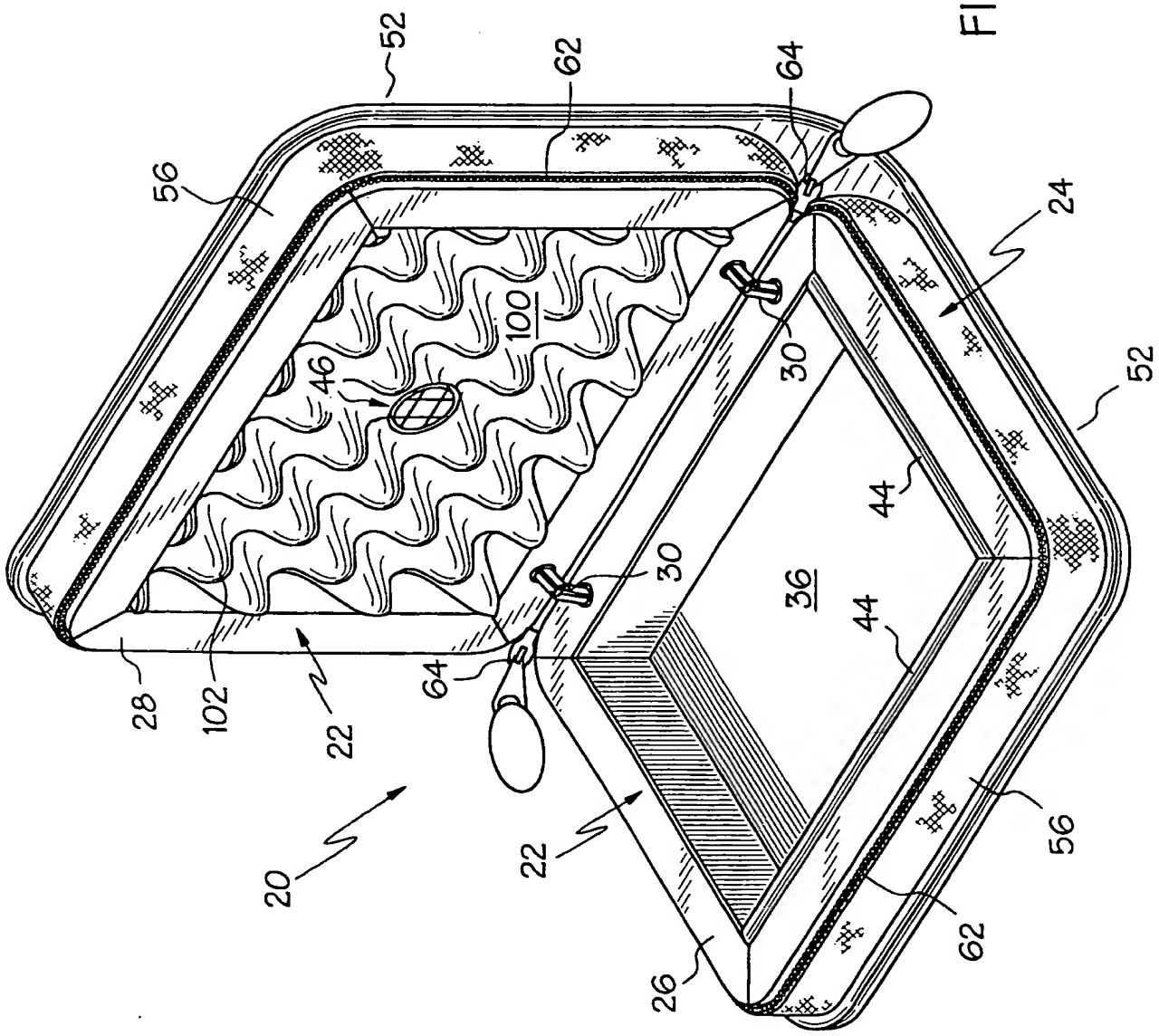

FIG. 7

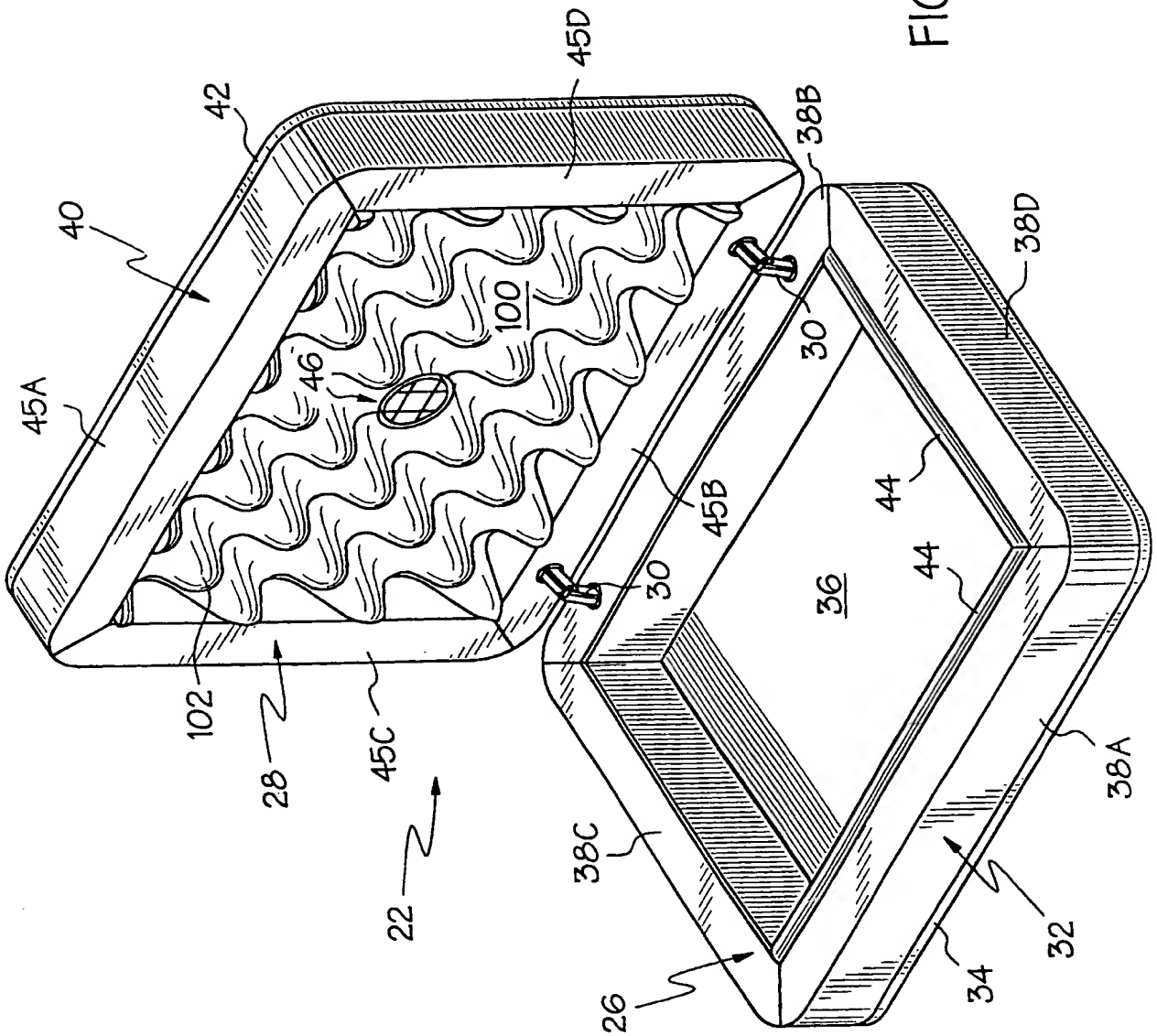
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FIG. 8

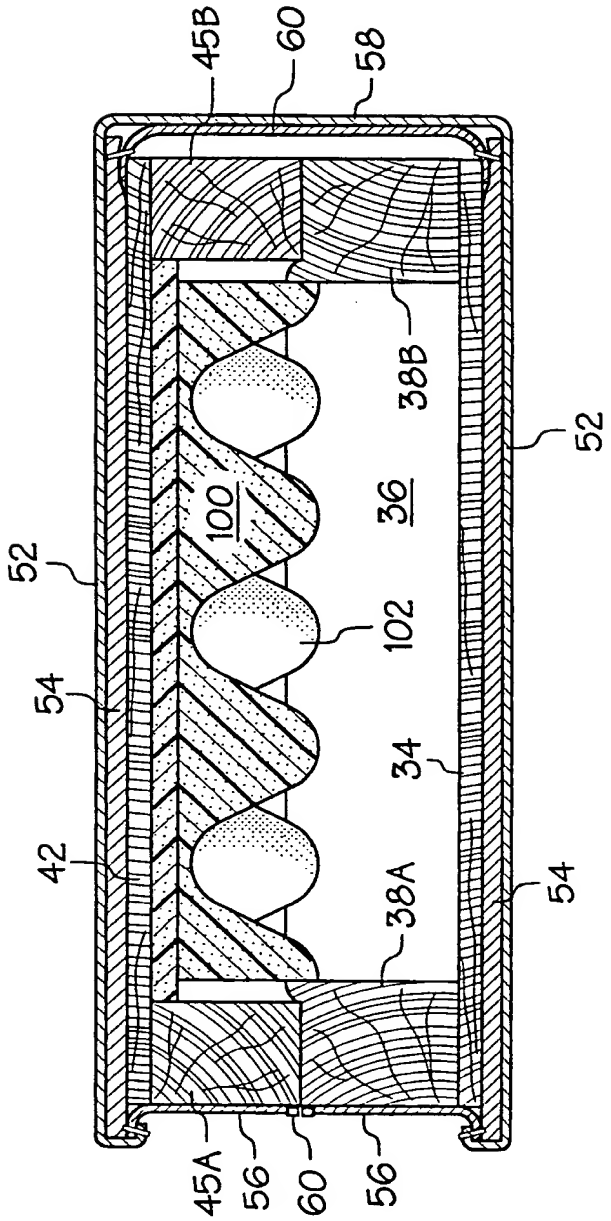

FIG. 9

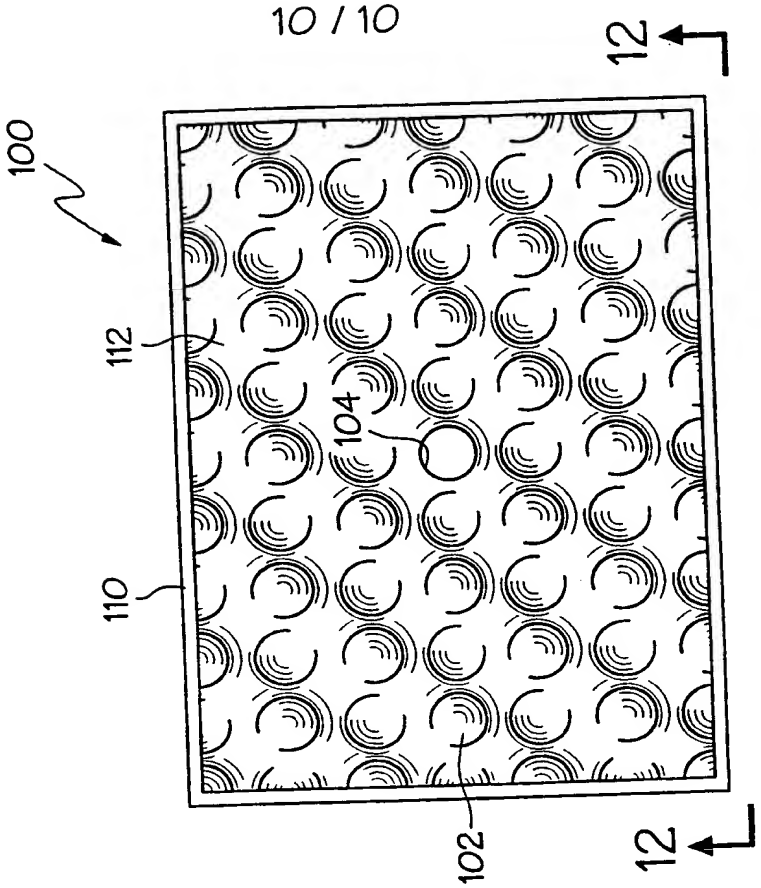

FIG. 11

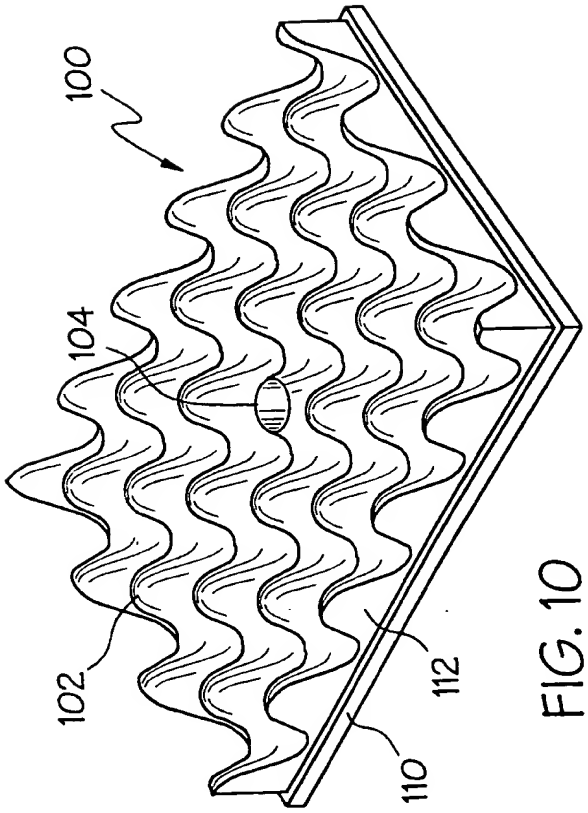

FIG. 10

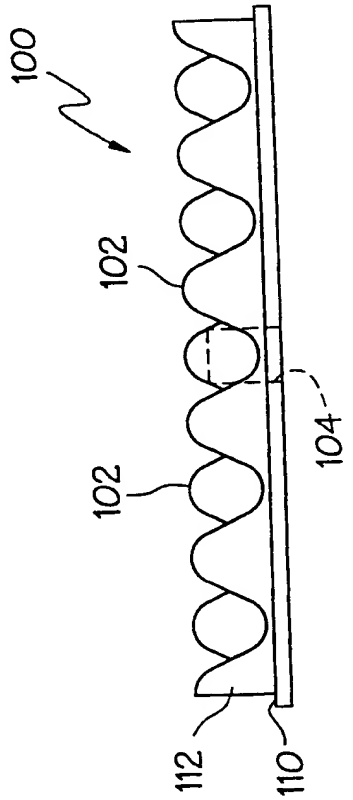

FIG. 12

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US97/24083

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) :A24F 25/02; B65D 81/22
US CL :150/130; 190/127; 206/213.1, 261; 312/31.1
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 150/123, 124, 127, 130; 190/119-121, 124, 125, 127; 206/204, 205, 213.1, 242, 256, 261-263, 312/31.1

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

NONE

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

NONE

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X ---- Y	US 2,018,551 A (FRELING) 22 October 1935, see Figure 2 and page 1, column 1, line 30 through column 2, line 13.	1-3, 6, 7, 12, 13 ---------- 4, 5, 8-11, 14-18
Y	FR 2,599,719 A (KAMPLER) 11 December 1987, see Figure 1 and page 1, line 27 through page 2, line 6.	5, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18
Y	HERRINGTON, The Enthusiasts' Catalog, 26 December 1996, front cover, rear cover and page 23, see especially page 23.	4, 14
Y	US 2,555,126 A (GREVE) 29 May 1951, see Figure 1 and column 3, lines 67-72.	9 and 17

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. ☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

11 FEBRUARY 1998

Date of mailing of the international search report

25 FEB 1998

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Box PCT
Washington, D.C. 20231

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For JIMMY G. FOSTER

Telephone No. (703) 308-1148

Sheila Veney
Paralegal Specialist
Group 3200

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet)(July 1992)★

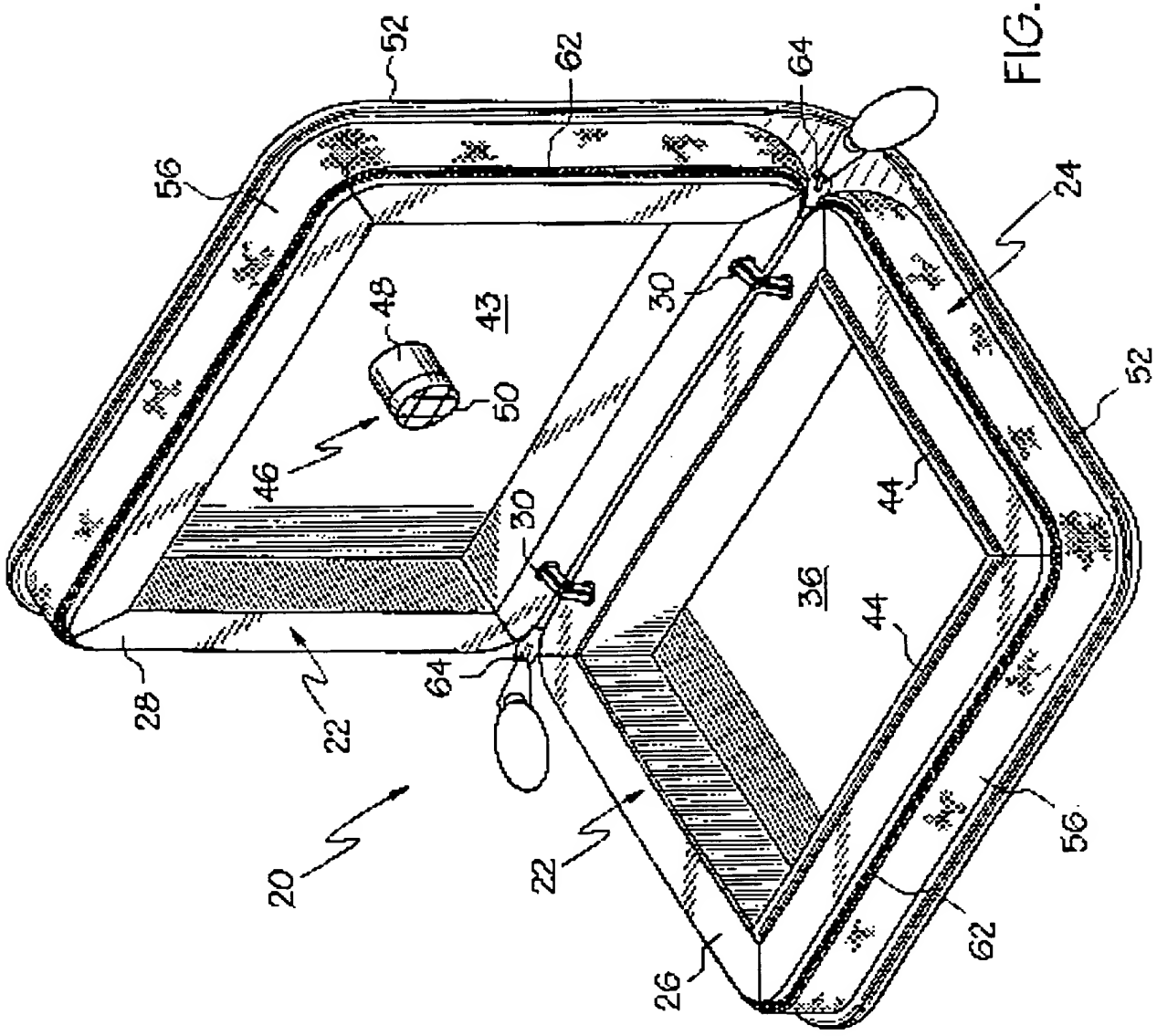

FIG. 1

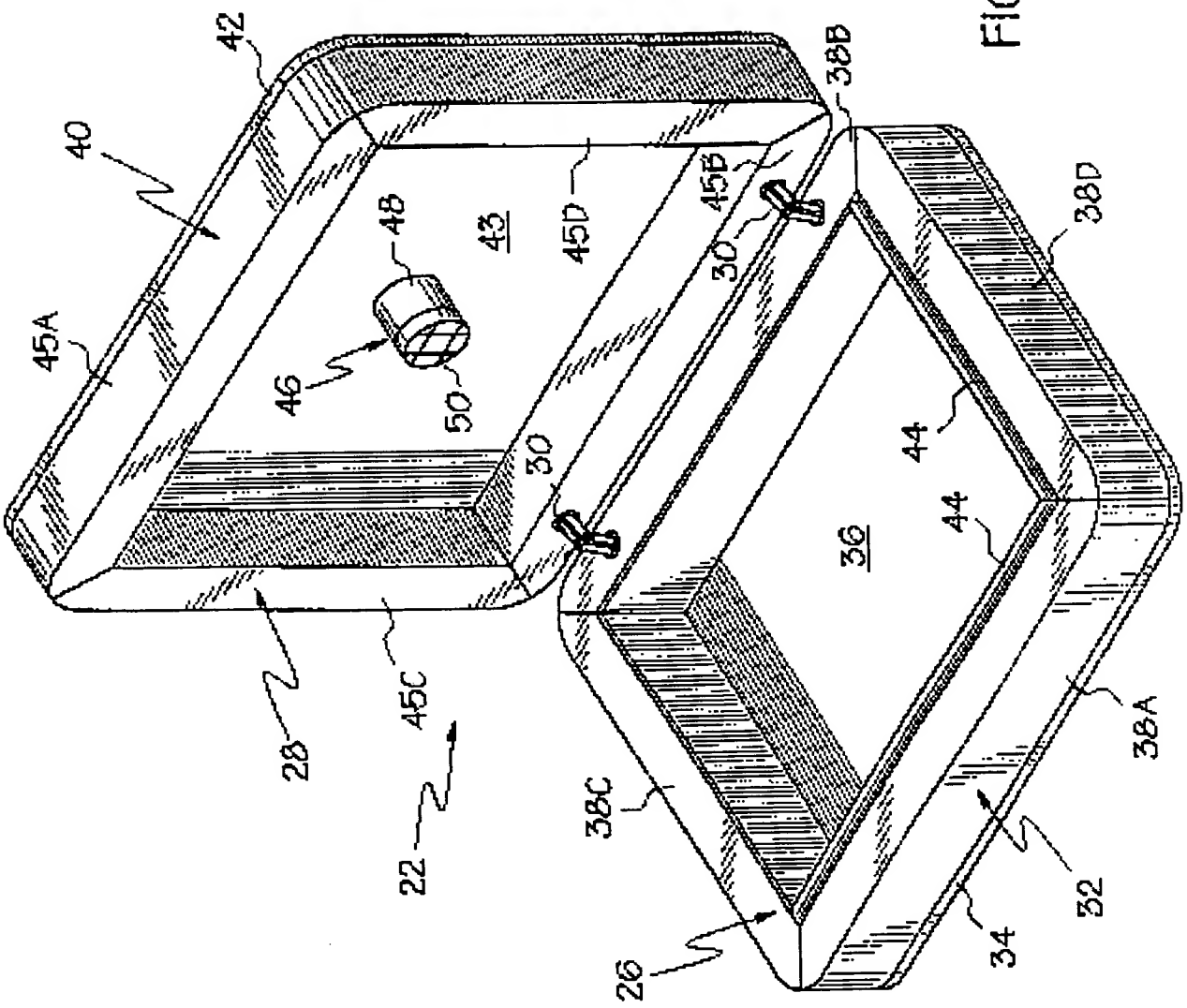
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FIG. 2

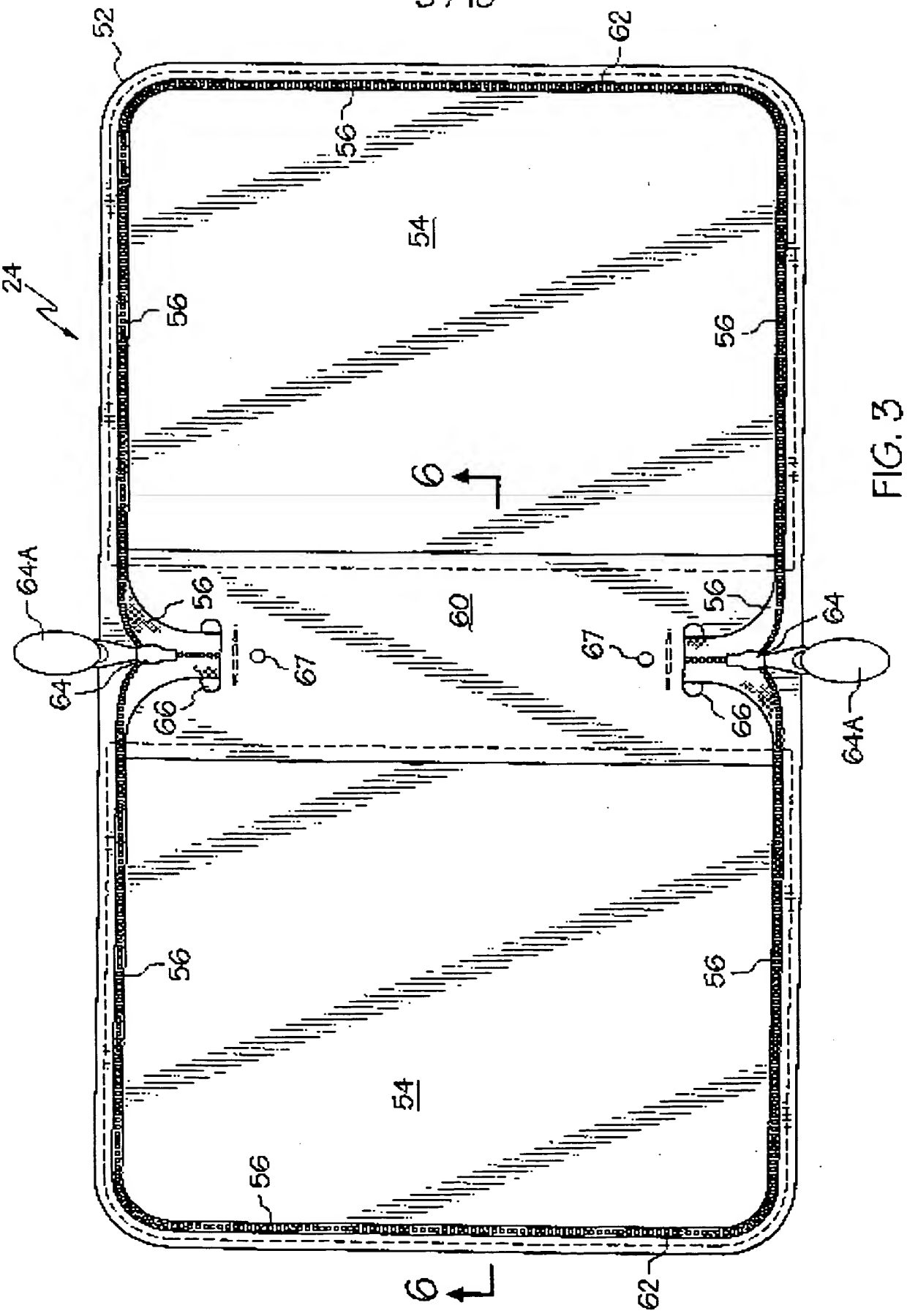
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FIG. 3

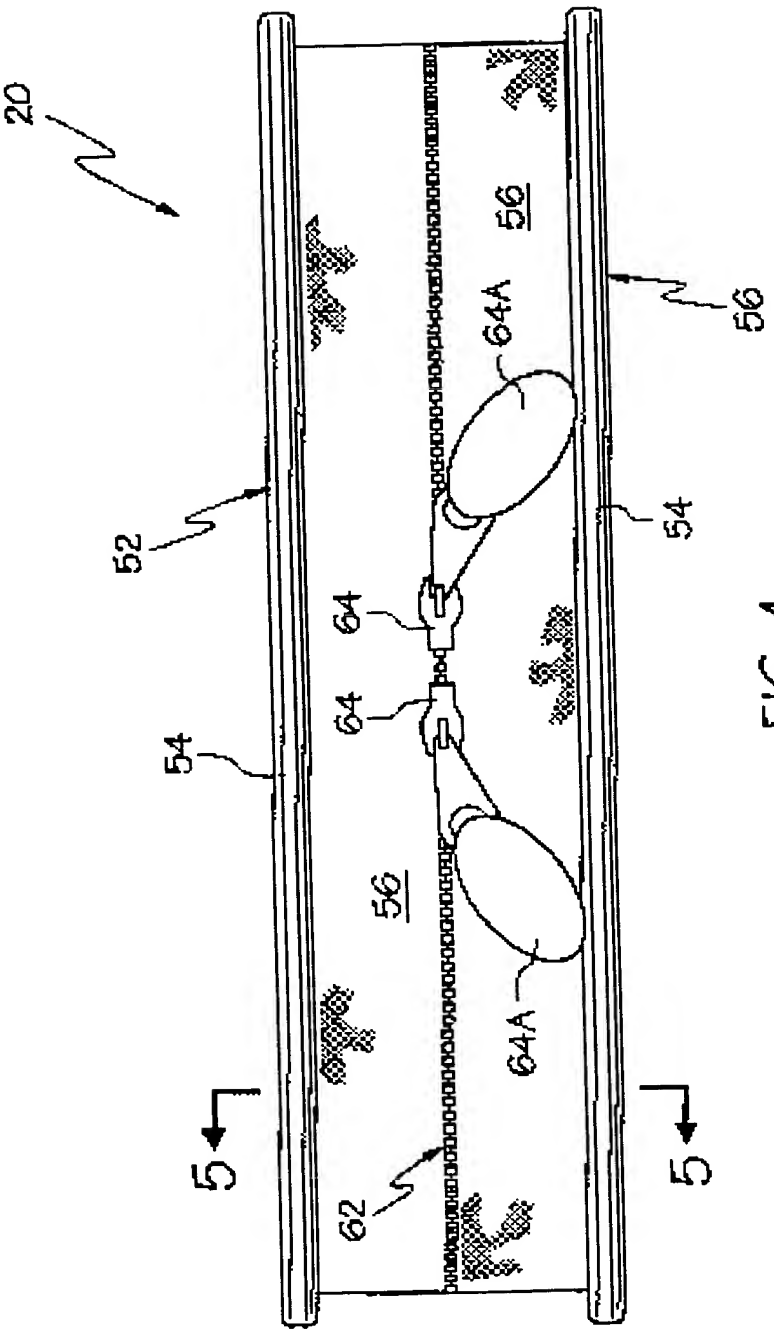


FIG. 4

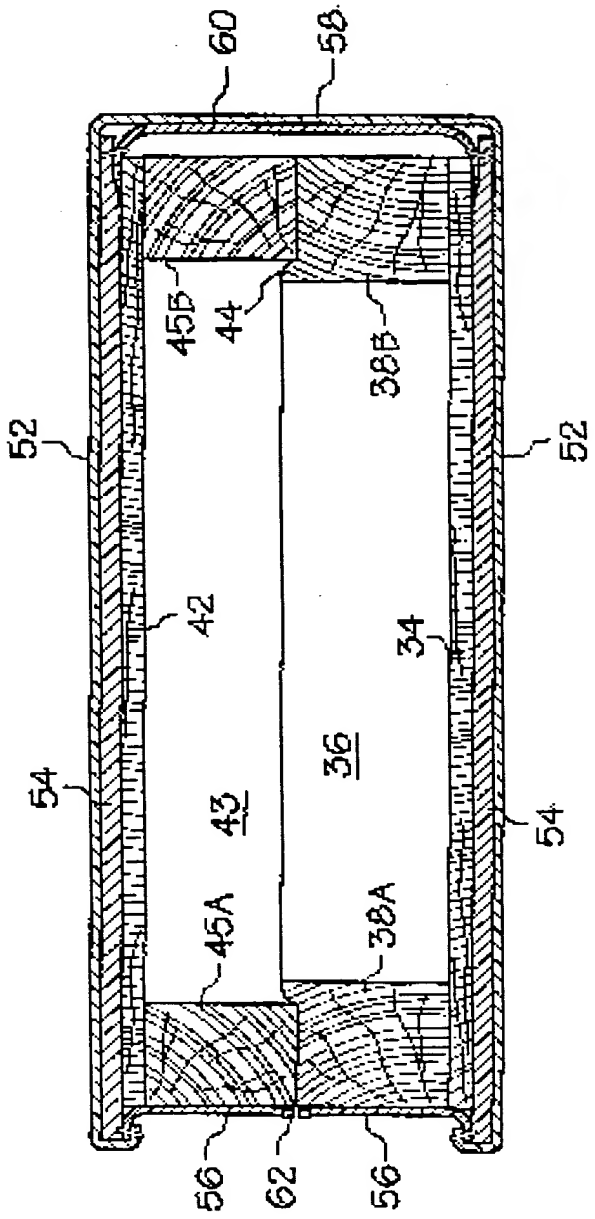


FIG. 5

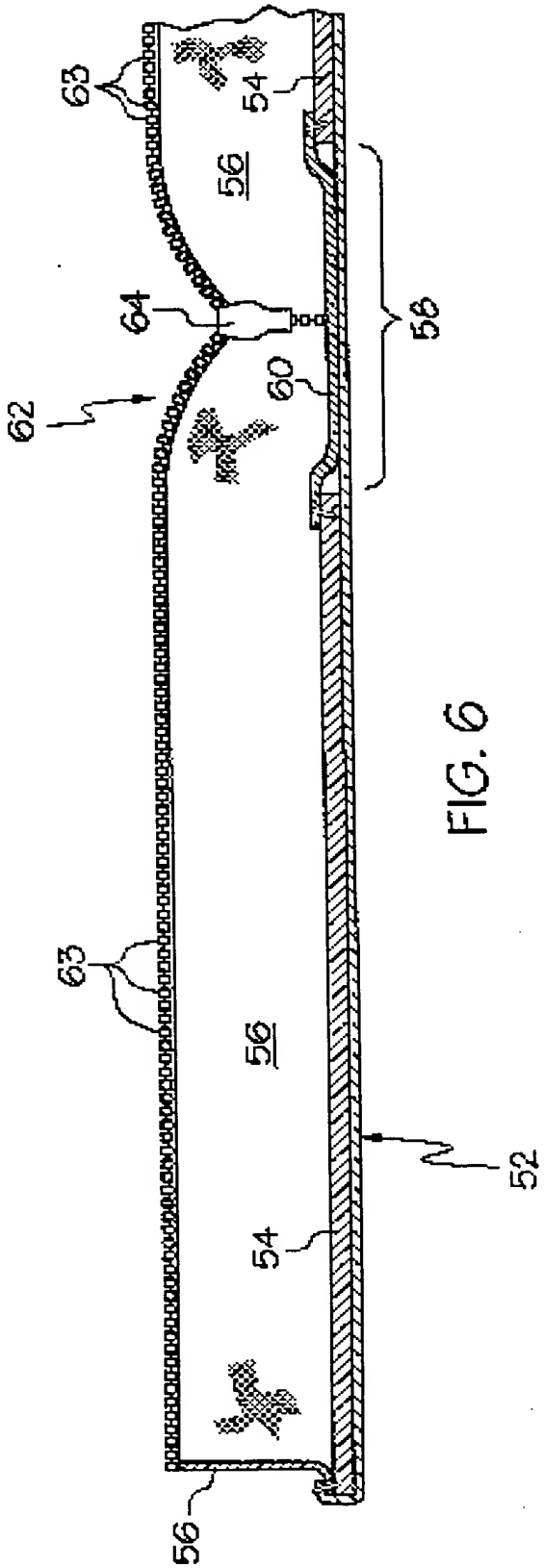


FIG. 6

FIG. 7

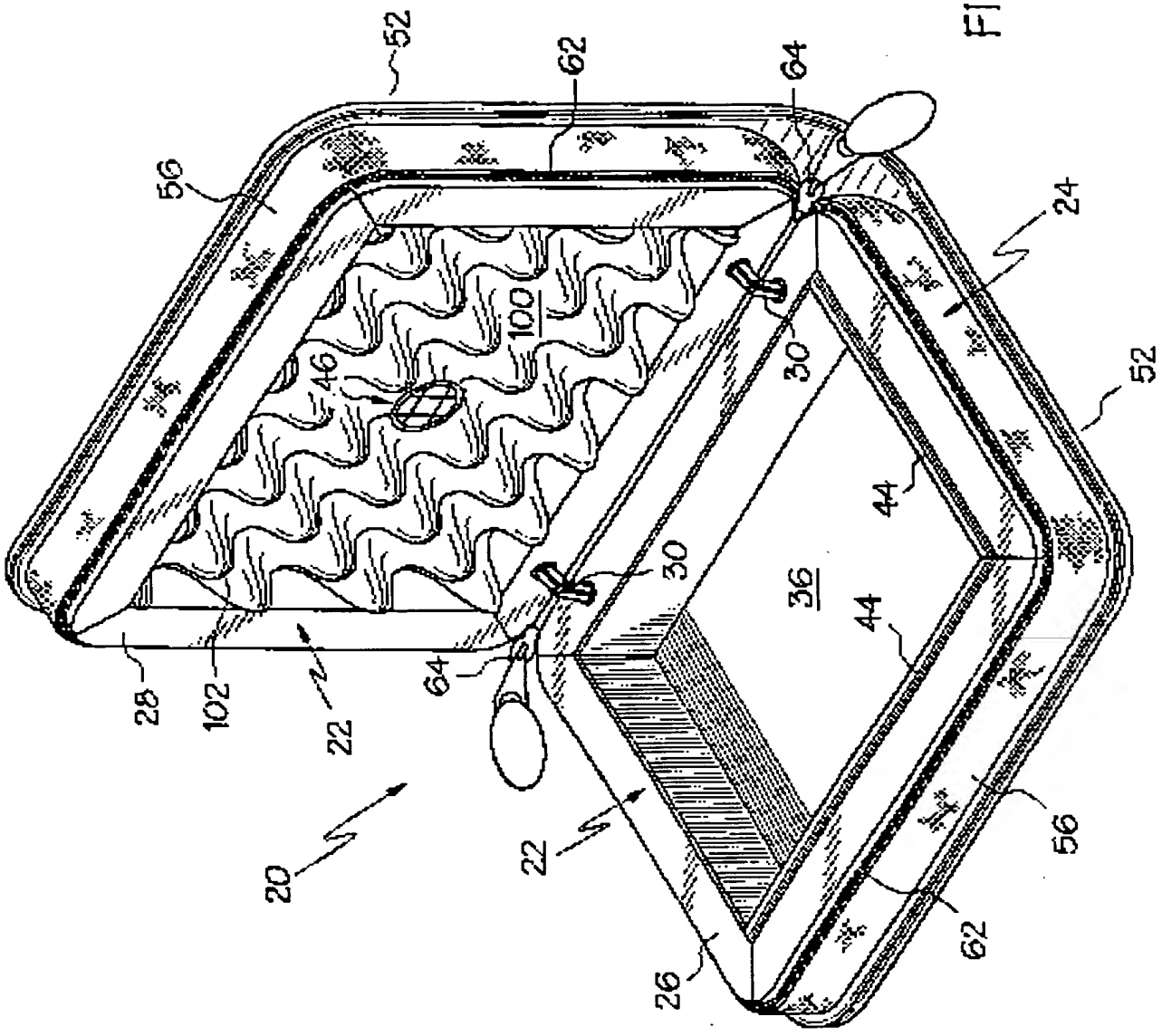
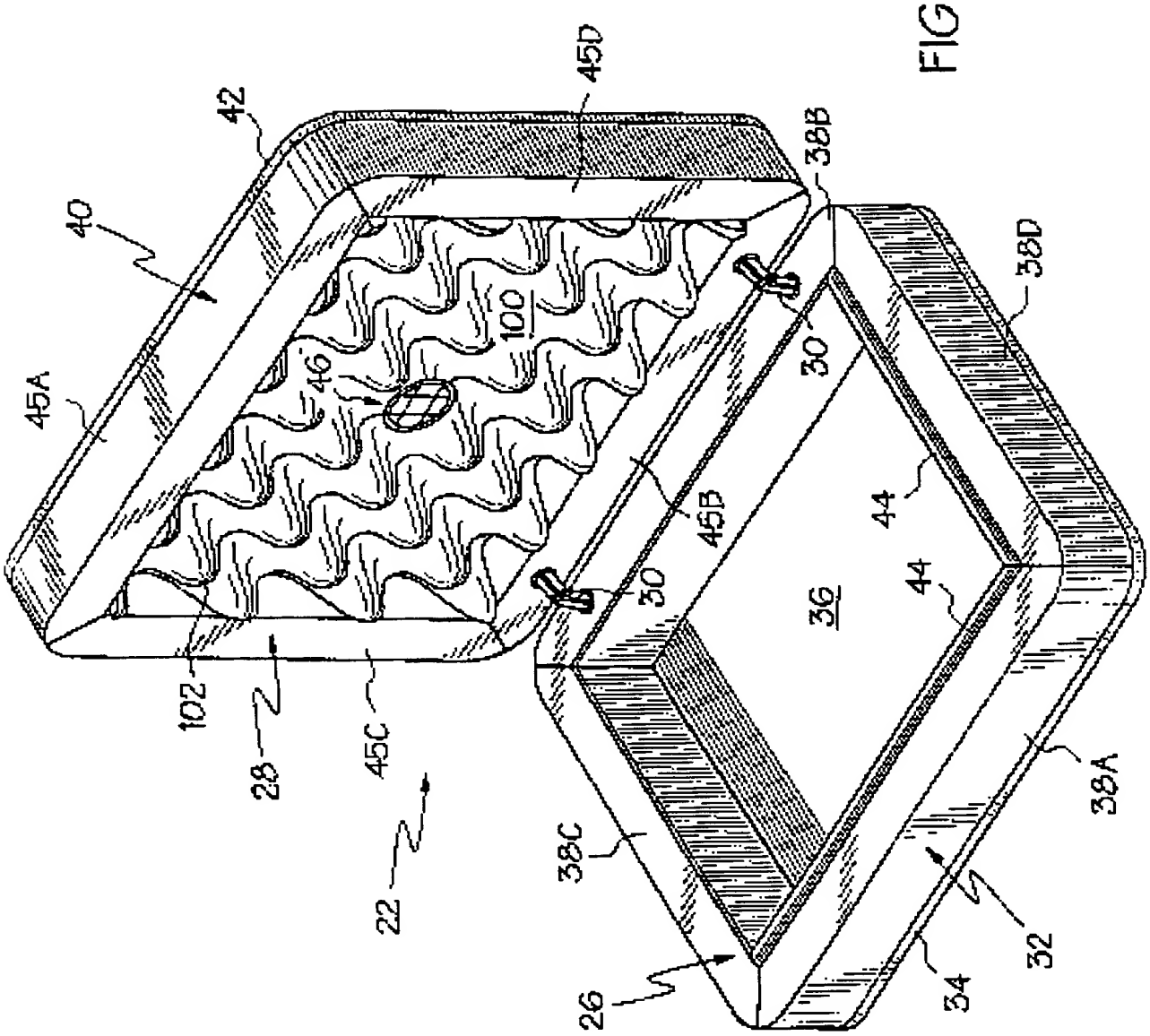


FIG. 8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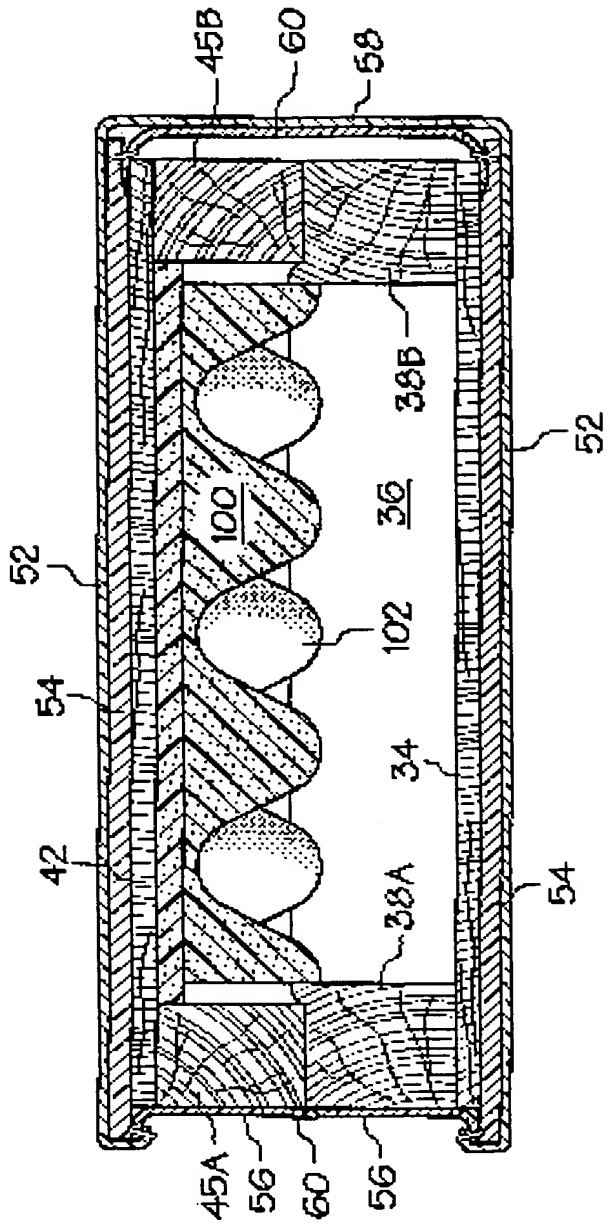

FIG. 9

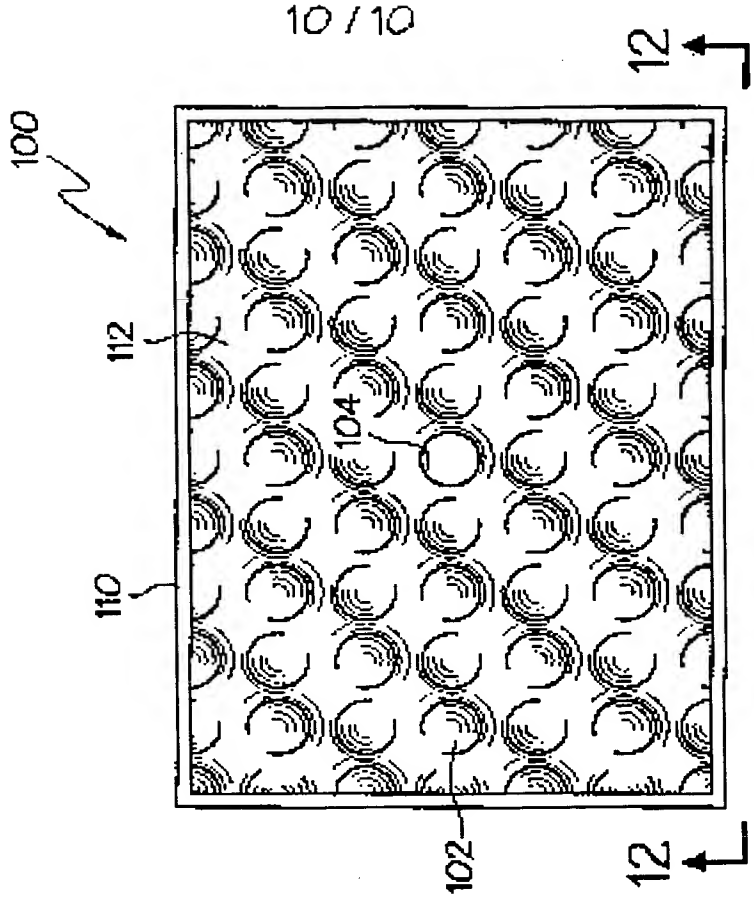

FIG. 11

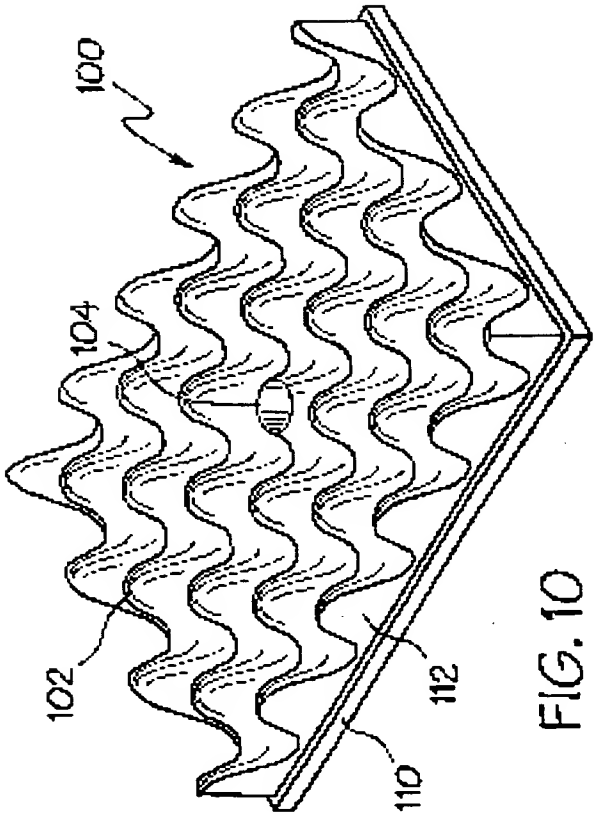

FIG. 10

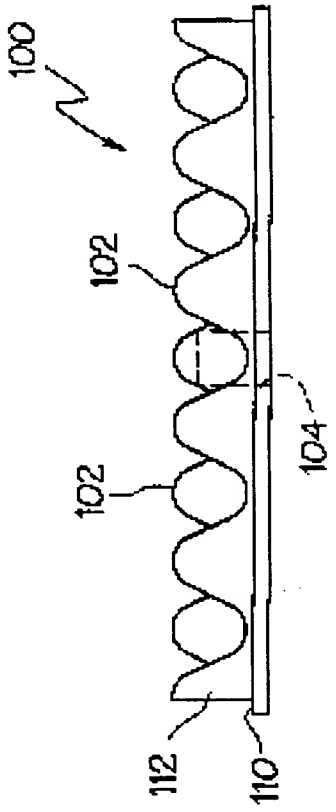

FIG. 12